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ABSTRACT

This paper presents research on the influence of divorce on the classroom behavior of school-aged children. It attempts to uncover some contributing factors that may play a role in how a child deals with divorce. It explores the role of the teacher and school in the intervention and discusses what teachers have observed in working with children of divorce. Data were gathered from a literature review and from interviews with 48 elementary school students. Ten teaching professionals were interviewed about their experiences working with children from divorced families. The literature review suggests that the major contributing factors that may play a role in how a child responds to divorce are parental conflict; parental involvement; family structure; and economic strain. Professionals report that children of divorce have more difficulty behaviorally and academically. They also suggest that children from divorce are more aggressive; pushy; needy for attention; physical; and have difficulty controlling their anger. Schools can play a major role in helping children deal with divorce and can help promote a child's adjustment to the new situation as described in the interviews with professionals. Teachers need to have close contact with parents, provide an environment of love and acceptance, and work to instill confidence in each of these children. (Contains 8 appendixes and 79 references.) (JDM)

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CHILDREN OF DIVORCE:

THE IMPACT ON CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

A Thesis

Presented to

the faculty of the Department of Education

Biola University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

By

Kevin Seiji Shinoda

Summer, 2001

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M.A. Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Education

Biola University

La Mirada, California

United States of America

By

Kevin Seiji Shinoda

Summer, 2001

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ABSTRACT

CHILDREN OF DIVORCE:

THE IMPACT ON CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Kevin Seiji Shinoda

Presents research on the influence of divorce on classroom behavior of school-aged children using three different approaches: literature review, interviews, and data analysis. Examines literature and discusses some of the contributing factors for pre and post-divorce behavior. Explains intervention methods for teachers and schools for helping children of divorce. Discusses responses of ten teaching professionals when asked about working with children of divorce. Describes statistical analysis of data on observations made of 48 elementary school students (in two classes) to demonstrate a correlation between divorce and total behavior scores.

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CHAPTER I: OPENING

Introduction

There is no dispute over the facts: the American divorce rate doubled in the 1960's and 1970's and has held steadily or possibly declined a bit since then. Current trends indicate that about half of all marriages will end in divorce. One million children will experience a parental divorce every year. In response, some children act out, while others become withdrawn. Too often, fathers fail to provide adequate financial support and mothers and children see their standards of living drop. Without a doubt, going through a divorce is a traumatic experience for parents and children alike (Cherlin, 2000). Slightly more than half of all divorces involve children under the age of 18, and about 40% of all children will experience parental divorce before reaching adulthood (Bumpass, 1990). The high rate of marital disruption, combined with an increase in births outside of marriage, means that about half of all children will reside at least temporarily in single-parent households, usually with their mothers (Castro & Bumpass, 1989). Because of remarriage, about one in seven children currently lives with a parent and a stepparent (Cherlin, 1992), and about one in three children will live with a stepparent for some time prior to reaching age 19 (Glick, 1989).

There is a large body of research focusing on the negative effects of divorce on children. This research is largely based on two long-standing assumptions: parental separation or divorce is always traumatic for children; and intact families provide a better environment for children than do single-parent families (Amato & Keith, 1991; Demo & Acock, 1988; Emery, 1982). As a result, researchers have been studying family structure

and attempting to identify family environments that facilitate or inhibit children's development and family well being. Generally, people assume that children living with two heterosexual parents in their first marriage (so-called "intact families") are advantaged because a) the parents provide both same-sex and other-sex role models, and b) the children benefit from the social, emotional, and economic resources of two parents. In addition, changes in living arrangements (for example, parents leaving the household, and changes in neighborhood, school, and peer groups) are typically viewed as disruptive and stressful for children, weakening parent-child bonds (Demo, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

Although there is considerable variability in outcomes over time, children from divorced and remarried families are more likely than children from intact families to have problems in their relationships with parents, siblings, and peers as well as lower self-esteem and academic problems. Divorce and or separation initiates changes and losses that are unquestionably painful for most children, especially when compounded by factors such as ongoing parental conflict, socioeconomic disadvantage, and other stressors related to changing family relationships (Hetherington, Bridges, & Insabell, 1998).

Children of divorce experience a significant upset in the family structure, which can lead to a number of adverse effects (Cantrell, 1986). Guidubaldi, Clemishaw, Perry, Mcloughlin (1983, in Richardson & Rosen, 1999) report that children of divorce are at risk for difficulty at school. They found that children of divorce had more disruptive classroom behavior, were absent more frequently, and had lower IQ scores than children

from intact families. A variety of studies have reported that children of divorce experience more adjustment problems than children who grow up in intact families. This research suggests that parental divorce increases the chances that a child will have difficulty with school, engage in early sex, suffer depression, commit delinquent acts, and use illicit substances (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994).

Studies have shown that children of divorced parents are disadvantaged in a number of ways as compared to children who grow up in intact families. They are less likely to perform well in school, more likely to exhibit behavioral problems, and more likely to have psychological and social difficulties (Amato, 1993; Amato & Keith 1991; McLanahan & Sandefur 1994). Evidence suggests that children who experience divorce and the accompanied disruptions in parent-child relationships, living arrangements, and economic circumstances fare less well than children in intact families who do not divorce (Amato & Keith, 1991). Although there is considerable consistency in outcomes, children whose parents separate or divorce, are on average, more likely to exhibit problematic behavior, have poorer mental health and academic performance, and have more social difficulties and lower self-concepts than children whose parents remain married (Amato, 1994).

Purpose

The purpose of this research is fourfold: 1) to uncover some of the contributing factors that may play a role whether a child deals with divorce negatively or positively, 2) to explore the role of the school and of the teacher in terms of intervention, 3) to discuss

what teaching professionals have observed in working with children of divorce, 4) to analyze the classroom observation data for statistical significance.

Contributing Factors

First, such factors as the age of the child at the time of separation, the degree of marital conflict, the economic position of the child's residential family, gender, and the quality of the child's relationship with his or her residential parent are all factors to be considered. It is not the simple event of divorce itself that produces the negative impact but the subsequent events-the inconsistent parenting, conflict between parents, economic hardships on the family, ect. that has the greatest effect on the child's adjustment (Emery, 1988).

Intervention

Second, the level of emotional support that these children experience can be increased by offering interventions through the schools. During familial disruptions, schools can play a significant role as a source of nurturance and continuity as well as a place where age-appropriate developmental tasks can be pursued (Goldman & King, 1985 in Richardson & Rosen, 1999). Interventions are a primary way schools can help children with effectively coping, and can promote the child's adjustment to the new situation (Freeman & Couchman, 1985 in Richardson and Rosen).

Interviews

Third, ten scripted interviews were conducted in which teachers, principals, and counselors were asked a series of questions (see Appendix B) about their experience with children from divorced homes. The ten teaching professionals combined had

approximately 140 years of experience working with children. Teaching professionals were interviewed to explore what they have observed in working with children of divorce and what recommendations they have for others dealing with children of divorce.

Data

Fourth, children were observed over an eight-week period in two separate classes, grades, and schools to assess classroom behavior. After behavior was assessed the family background of each student was revealed to see if a child's family background (intact or divorced home) could be used as a significant predictor of classroom behavior.

Research Question

Why do some children have more difficulty (problems in their relationships with parents, siblings, and peers as well as lower self-esteem and academic problems, more disruptive classroom behavior, absent more, lower IQ scores, difficulty with school, engage in early sex, suffer depression, commit delinquent acts, use illicit substances, less likely to perform well in school, more likely to exhibit behavioral problems, and more likely to have psychological and social difficulties, more likely to exhibit problematic behavior, have poorer mental health and academic performance, and have more social difficulties and lower self-concepts than children whose parents remain married) dealing with divorce than others, and what can be done to help these children.

Hypothesis

Based upon literature review, the more contributing factors (e.g. pre-divorce/post-divorce conflict, parental involvement, family structure, economic hardship, gender, age)

children from divorced homes have working against them, the more difficulty they will have in adjusting to the changes that accompany divorce. Children from divorced homes will be more likely to display behavior problems at school when contributing factors are taken into account compared to children from intact homes.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Contributing Factors

Parental Conflict

Previous research has indicated that conflict between parents can be seriously harmful to children, particularly if they are directly exposed to the conflict (Emery, 1982). It is reasonable to expect that children's adjustment in the post divorce period will depend, at least to some extent, on the level of conflict that is maintained between their parents or, alternatively, on the extent to which parents can moderate their conflict or shield the children from exposure to it. In a review of the literature, on children's adjustment to divorce, Amato (1993) concluded that the level of continuing interparental conflict was the most well documented predictor of outcomes following divorce.

Do the effects of marital disruption on child well being vary according to the level or marital conflict that children experience before the separation? Many children endure high levels of marital conflict throughout their childhood, with prolonged exposure impairing their well being. Problems in parent child-relationships have been observed as early as eight to twelve years before parental divorce. Many of the difficulties that children in divorced families experience stem from factors that predate divorce (Demo, 2000). If the divorce represents an exit from severe marital disharmony, children will make an easier adjustment than if the separation was unexpected. Children removed from intense parental conflict may fare better than those whose high-conflict parents remain together. A study by Amato, Loomis, and Booth (1995) used longitudinal data from a study of marital instability over the life course and documented that the well being

of young adults after a parental divorce was highest among those who experienced high levels of conflict before the disruption and lowest among who experienced less conflict before the divorce. They also found that when young people were not aware of the level of their parents' unhappiness, divorce is likely to be unanticipated and unwelcome by the youth. Youth in low-conflict homes prior to disruption showed negative responses to divorce, presumably because they were surprised by and less well prepared for their parents' break-up (Morrison, Coiro, Ruane, 1999).

Some researchers have shown that the effects of parental conflict can be more harmful to children than parental absence through death or divorce (Emery, 1982). In a longitudinal study of adolescents, Mechanic and Hansell (1989) found that those in high-conflict, intact families had significantly poorer adjustment than those in low-conflict, divorced families. Similarly, Slater and Haber (1984) found that adolescents from high-conflict families reported lower self-esteem and greater anxiety, regardless of whether or not their parents had divorced or remained married. Moreover, it may be that children in newly disrupted families face challenges (e.g., new living arrangements, changes in neighborhood or schools, parental quarrels over the division of income and property, and custody battles) that place them at risk for difficulties in adjustment, regardless of how well their parents got along before they separated (Morrison, Coiro, Ruane, 1999).

A number of studies have shown that parental conflict is related to a variety of adjustment difficulties in children (Cummings & Davies, 1994). There are several reasons why this may be the case. Parental conflict may be seen as a stressor for children, taking a psychological toll on children's adjustment (Cummings & Gummings,

1988 in Hanson, 1999). Parental conflict may also influence child behavior through the process of social modeling, whereby children acquire the same behavioral strategies used by their parents during conflicts. Conflict also may affect children indirectly by altering parent-child relationships (Kline, Johnston, & Tschann, 1991). The idea that pre-divorce conflict is responsible for the problems of children are consistent with findings from cross sectional studies that show children in high-conflict intact families do just as poorly as children in divorced families (Long, 1986). Other researchers have attempted to specify the importance of conflict relative to that of family structure in influencing children's welfare by using measures of conflict applicable to both intact and single-parent families, and comparing the relative additive effects on child welfare of conflict and family structure. Most studies using this strategy suggest that conflict has stronger negative effects on children's' well being than does family structure (Mechanic & Hansell, 1989). Children in families with high levels of parental conflict will show equally low levels of well being, regardless of family structure. According to this perspective, children living in single-parent families due to divorce with low conflict between parents may, in fact, be better adjusted than children in high conflict families who have never divorced (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Parental Involvement (Custodial and Non-Custodial)

The research literature indicates that parental involvement in children's education appears to be associated with a range of positive outcomes for elementary school children, including fewer behavior problems (Comer, 1987), lower dropout rates (NCES, 1992), and higher student achievement (Muller, 1993 in Zellman & Waterman, 1998).

These educational and social realities have led many to conclude that lack of parental involvement is one of the causes of problems in schools (Zellman & Waterman, 1998). A number of studies indicate that divorced custodial parents, compared with married parents, invest less time, are less supportive, have fewer rules, dispense harsher discipline, provide less supervision, and engage in more conflict with their children (Astone & McLanahan, 1991). Many of these deficits in parenting presumably result from the stress of marital disruption and single parenting. Similarly with this perspective, Larson and Gillman (1999) found that negative emotions were more likely to be transmitted from single mothers to adolescent children than vice versa, especially when mothers were under stress. The quality of parental functioning is one of the best predictors of children's behavior and well being (Amato, 2000).

A good relationship with at least one parent seems to offset the negative effects of parental conflict (Amato & Booth, 1991). They found that children who became distant from their parents following divorce displayed more problems than did those who maintained a close relationship with their parents. In addition, they noted that those who had a close relationship with their parents after the divorce did not differ significantly from children who came from happily intact families in terms of psychological and social adjustment. It seems that while children of divorce are more vulnerable to negative outcomes, it is not necessarily the divorce itself that affects adjustment; rather, it is the quality of family relationships (Ensign, Scherman, & Clark, 1998).

Although a shared residence no longer joins divorced families, when parents are involved, they remain connected through shared co-parental and parent child

relationships. The nature of these relationships, however, undergoes dramatic changes during the divorce process. Parents must establish new rules for parenting together in their new family structure while at the same time relinquishing their roles as marital partners (Emery, 1994 in Madden, 2000). Moreover, their individual roles as parents are significantly altered. The majority of mothers must adjust to the role of sole physical custodian (NCHS, 1995 in Madden, 2000) taking on primary responsibility for household management and the day-to-day parenting needs of their children (Furstenberg & Nord, 1985). Fathers, on the other hand, must adjust to the loss of shared residence with their children, described by many men as the most significant loss of the divorce process (Dudley, 1996 in Madden, 2000).

Unfortunately, societal norms defining post-divorce roles and relationships are not well established. In particular, the parenting role of the non-residential, non-custodial father remains quite ambiguous. Scholars have suggested that the stress associated with this ambiguity increases the likelihood that divorced fathers will withdraw from parental involvement, typically quantified as declines in visitation, child support payment, and co parental interaction (McKenry, Price, Fine, & Serovich, 1992). The level of involvement by the nonresidential parent--usually the father--is frequently cited as an important determinant of children's adjustment to divorce. It is argued that children show better adjustment when both the custodial and non-custodial parent is actively involved in childrearing (Madden-Derdich & Leonard, 2000).

Family Structure (Single-Parents and Stepfamilies)

The shared act of conception gives children the right to both a mother and a father. Sadly, however, the natural birthright to two parents is lost for most children in the aftermath of a divorce. In nine out of ten cases of divorce, mothers receive primary custody of the children and "visitation" for fathers only every other weekend is common. For most non-custodial fathers, divorce not only ends their marriage but often their participation as a parent. One national survey found that forty-nine percent of children had not seen their father even once in the preceding year, and fewer than one in six saw their fathers once a week (Teyber, 1992).

Single-parent families can no longer be viewed as nontraditional families. More than 25% of American families are headed by only a mother or a father. Strong evidence exists to support the contention that single parents experience more behavioral problems with their children than intact families. Both single fathers and mothers reported more behavioral problems than married parents. It appears the lack of any parent, father or mother, increases the likelihood of children's problem behavior (Kleist, 1999). It is estimated that half of all children born in the 1980's will spend some time in a one-parent family (Hargreaves, 1991).

One explanation of behavior problems is that children from single-parent families have more difficulty adapting their behavior to teacher expectations than intact family children. In Wallerstein and Kelly's study (1980), teachers reported negative behavior changes in two-thirds of the children after divorce, changes which included increased restlessness, daydreaming, sadness, difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and

exaggerated need for teacher's attention. Also, after divorce many children experience unexpected mood changes and outbursts of anger and irritation while at school. Children in divorced families tend to be more disruptive in class, to have less efficient study habits, and to be tardy or absent more often than intact family children (Hetherington, Camara, & Featherman, 1983). Some studies report that children in one-parent families have more household chores than children in intact families (Amato, 1987). These chores may reduce the time these children have to do homework (Hargreaves, 1991).

Not all single-parent families have children with behavior problems. Some "successful" single-parent families indicated that they have less conflict and tension with two adults no longer living together. Mothers indicated experiencing their single-parent household as more cohesive, with more time to spend with children and the ability to raise their children as they saw fit versus having to negotiate values and beliefs with the other parent. They were also quick to point out the difficulties. Most reported that the constant pressure of adult responsibilities without the immediate relief available from a spouse proved most stressful. Also, all mothers believed that single parents have to work harder to be successful. These successful single-parent families were headed by mothers who recognized the importance of developing a positive parenting partnership and new alliances with their children. The development of a partnership involved letting go of anger at the ex-spouse in order to develop a relationship where both parents were able to focus on the children. Mothers formed new relationships with children that kept out the "new man of the house" role and girls from becoming their mother's peer or confidant (Kleist, 1999).

Stepfamilies are the fastest growing type of family in the United States. Although the divorce rate is high, people have not given up on marriage. Approximately one-half of all adults who divorce remarry within one year, and seventy-five percent of women and eighty percent of men remarry within three years. Despite somewhat lower remarriage rates for adults who have children, most people continue to seek a partner in life (Teyber, 1992). Current statistics reveal that approximately 33% of all Americans are now part of stepfamilies (Booth & Dunn, 1994), about 40% of all families with young children will become stepfamilies before the children turn 18 (Glick, 1989), and approximately 30% of all children will spend some time in a stepfamily (Bumpass, Raley, & Sweet, 1995).

Although there is evidence that some stepfamilies exhibit positive family interactions and provide healthy environments for children and adults (Kelley, 1995 in Michaels, 2000), there is also evidence that stepfamilies are at higher risk than intact families for various problems. Research has revealed that children in stepfamilies are susceptible to behavior problems and poor academic performance (Demo & Acock, 1996). Remarried couples experience unique sources of marital conflict that include boundary ambiguity, conflicting loyalties, stepparent-stepchild relationships, and the stepparent's disciplinary role (Burrell, 1995 in Michaels, 2000). The stepparent-stepchild relationship generally is considered to be the most problematic and stressful relationship in stepfamilies (Ganong & Coleman, 1994 in Ganong, Coleman, Fine, & Martin, 1999). Consequently, rather than being in a relationship that is chosen by the participants, the step-relationship is often involuntary, and in some stepfamilies there may be little

motivation for stepchildren and stepparents to form close bonds (Ganong, Coleman, Fine, & Martin, 1999).

Economic Strain

Many children face economic deprivation and the disadvantages that correlate with it while growing up. In 1997, almost 20% of children in the United States lived below the poverty threshold. Considering the poverty rate for the total U.S. population was 13%, children experience the highest poverty rate relative to all other age groups. About 9% of children were in extreme poverty, defined as less than 50% of the poverty threshold (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998 in Kim, Soo Yeon, Hong, Gong-Soog, & Rowe, 2000). As mentioned, children are more likely than any other age group to experience poverty in the United States, comprising 40% of the poor population. In arguably the most affluent nation in the world, one of four American children lives in poverty, the highest rate among seventeen developed nations (Demo, 2000).

Economically deprived parents are not able to provide good food and nutrition, housing, health care, education and good neighborhoods for their children. Although there are many public programs for children, they are very limited and targeted only at the very poor. Therefore, the well being of children depends entirely on parental economic resources (Kim, Hong, & Rowe, 2000). A number of studies have demonstrated that a deficiency of parental income has a detrimental impact on children. When income insecurity and inequitable distribution of benefits and services continue, the gaps in children's development and well being by income will increase (Astone & McLanahan, 1991).

Marital disruption is often associated with a dramatic loss in family income (Morgan, 1991). This decline in standard of living might cause children to feel frustrated and angry. Also, limited means may require moving to neighborhoods with inadequate schools, high crime rates, and a well-developed delinquent subculture (McLanahan & Booth, 1989). Such an environment is likely to increase a child's risk for both internalizing and externalizing problems. Therefore, the increased incidence of adjustment problems reported for children of divorce may simply be a consequence of the economic hardship that often follows marital disruption (Simons, Lin, Gordon, Conger, & Lorenz, 1999).

Gender

Recent studies have altered the traditional belief that boys are more traumatized by divorce than girls. New studies have found that in mother-custody families, boys tend to have more difficulty than girls, exhibiting more impulsive, anti-social, and aggressive behavior and experiencing more interpersonal problems with parents, teachers, and peers. On the other hand, girls tend to react with lower self-esteem, anxiety, and depression. Some researchers have found that at the outset of parents' divorce, boys of elementary school age seem to have more problems than girls, while girls tend to experience delayed reaction, reacting most strongly to the divorce during their adolescence (Hargreaves, 1991).

The problems caused by divorce, and the life in the care of a single-mother are more pervasive for boys than for girls. Boys in single-mother families, in contrast to girls in single-mother families and to children in intact homes, have more long-term

adjustment problems. Younger boys tend to be more dependent and help seeking, and older boys in contrast are more aggressive and disobedient. Compared to girls, boys in single-mother home exhibit more behavior problems at school, and have poorer school achievement. In contrast, there tends to be an increasingly widening gap between the behavior of boys in mother-headed homes and boys in intact homes (Teyber, 1992).

There is substantial evidence suggesting boys and girls respond differently to a father leaving the home (Guidibaldi & Perry, 1985 in Mott & Kowalski-Jones, 1997). In the short run, possibly for as long as two years following the father's leaving, the home environment often can be stressful, and boys in particular, may act out in a variety of interpersonal behaviors both inside and outside the home (Demo & Acock, 1988). Boys are generally more aggressive in their disruptive behaviors and more often follow noncompliant behavior paths (Allison & Furstenberg, 1989). The greater behavioral difficulty expressed by boys may partly reflect a stronger father-son bonding prior to the disruption, a bonding that has been interrupted (Mott & Kowaleski, 1997).

There are several theories about the differences in boys' and girls' adjustment to divorce. In part, boys may be exposed to more marital conflict than girls because parents may be more willing to fight in front of a boy, yet boys receive less outside support from teachers and friends. Sex-role stereotypes might also influence boys' and girls' responses to divorce. Boys may be expected to control their feelings and to need less support than girls, but at the same time they may be allowed to exhibit more disruptive behavior than girls (Hetherington, Camara, & Featherman, 1983).

Researchers have found that parents are more involved in disciplining the same-sex child than the opposite-sex child. That is, daughters tend to be disciplined more by their mothers than their fathers, and sons tend to be disciplined more by their fathers than their mothers. However, if the father is not actively involved in parenting after the divorce, the son loses the most important source of discipline. In contrast, because mothers usually retain custody (90% of the time), there is little or no loss of discipline for girls (Teyber, 1992). Studies have found that girls in father-only families tend to have the same behavior problems as boys with their mothers. Because most boys and girls remain with their mothers under current custody arrangements, boys may experience more post-divorce adjustment problems than girls for this reason (Hargreaves, 1991).

Developmental Characteristics

Young children often do not know or understand the word "divorce." Young children do not even understand the word "marriage." Both are adult words evolving from social contacts legitimized by state laws. What children do understand is that they are young, small, and ill equipped to protect themselves from the demands of the greater world-or even to exist in it-without the protections of adults. And, in most cases, those adults are the child's parents (Francke, 1983). To understand children's reactions to divorce more clearly, we must examine how the impact of divorce affects children differently at different ages (Teyber, 1992).

Preschoolers

Preschool children often react to their parents' separation with both anger and sadness. Boys tend to become noisier, angrier, and more restless. They may not play as

well with friends and tend to sit by themselves more often. Boys often interrupt group activities with other children. Some girls will be angry, too, but others will become like little adults. These little girls become excessively concerned with being neat and good and may lecture or scold other children as if they were a parent or teacher. Both boys and girls at this young age will feel sad, cry more often, and become more demanding.

In response to the initial shock of parental divorce or separation, children will also regress-act younger than their age. That is, they will return to behavior that they had previously outgrown. For example, children may resume sucking their thumbs, carrying a blanket, or needing help feeding themselves. Also, these children will feel more anxious or insecure. For example, parents may observe more nightmares, bedwetting, and fear about leaving the parent (Teyber, 1992).

School-Aged

Divorce seems to be especially difficult for six-to-eight-year-old children. Boys at this age are especially upset by the divorce or separation and will usually be more distressed than girls. The primary reaction of children at this age is sadness. Children at this age are most likely to cry openly about the marital disruption and will often be sad and weepy. They tend to long for the non-custodial parent, and boys may particularly miss their fathers intensely. At this age, children are especially likely to believe that the non-custodial parent has rejected them. This intense feeling of rejection and being unlovable results in lowered self-esteem, depression, and all too often, a sharp decline in school performance. These children are worried about their parents, have trouble concentrating in school, and often try to prevent the divorce and restore their family.

The primary feeling for six-to-eight-year-olds is sadness, it changes to anger for nine-to-twelve-year-olds. Children at this age may be intensely angry with both parents for the breakup or especially angry with the parent who initiated the separation. These children are prone to taking sides with one parent against the other and to assigning blame. They are also vulnerable to becoming embroiled in destructive parental battles, in which one parent seeks to blame, harass, or get revenge on the other. Unfortunately, many parents actively enlist children in these destructive parental battles.

Anger is not the only reaction of children at this age. They are also sad about the breakup, afraid of what is going to happen, and lonely. In particular, these children feel powerless. They do not want the divorce, miss their intact families, long for the non-custodial parent, and feel helpless to alter the tremendous changes occurring in their lives. Fueled by angry defiance and profound feelings of helplessness, school performance drops significantly for about one half of the children in this age group. Other symptoms may emerge during this age period as well. Many children will begin to have trouble getting along with their friends or will begin complaining about physical complaints such as headaches and stomachaches (Teyber, 1992).

Adolescence

The response of adolescents to divorce or separation can vary greatly. On the one hand adolescents often adjust to the family disruption better than younger children. This is partly because they are becoming more independent and removed from family relations. They do not need as much affection and guidance as younger children. Adolescents usually cope with the divorce by distancing themselves from their parents

and becoming more involved in their own plans and future. Some adolescents even show a positive developmental spurt in response to divorce. These adolescents are often helpful to their parents in dealing with younger siblings during the difficult time. This maturity and compassion can be seen as they help constructively in family decisions, help with household responsibilities, and provide stable, nurturing relationships to younger siblings.

On the other hand, however, many adolescents initially feel betrayed by the divorce. Some adolescents will angrily disengage from the family and may begin acting out sexually. Other adolescents may become depressed, withdraw from peers and family involvement, or lose their plans and ambitions for their own futures. Like older school-aged children, adolescents are also likely to have problems when they are pulled into loyalty conflicts and feel they must take sides or choose one parent over the other. For most adolescents, however, the main concern is about their own future (Teyber, 1992).

Intervention Methods

Intervention (Schools and Teachers)

Dissemination of information regarding model, school-based intervention for children of divorce and their effectiveness on reducing adverse effects of divorce on children is essential. Many schools across the country are now offering some type of intervention for children of divorce. Previous research has found that school-based interventions help counter the adverse effects of divorce (Pedro-Carroll, Alpert-Gillis, & Cowen, 1992 in Richardson & Rosen, 1999). Another school-based study found that: "Children of divorce who perceived themselves as having more overall support had lower

scores on measures of post-divorce difficulties, anxiety, and worry, and higher scores on measures of openness about the divorce and positive resources" (Cowen, Pedro-Carroll, & Alpert-Gillis, 1990). The implication from these studies is that emotional support in the school setting is effective in helping children of divorce to cope with their situations (Richardson & Rosen, 1999).

The most important person at school for a child is his or her teacher. For many students, especially those from single-parent families, their teacher becomes their parent away from home. At school, the teacher can be a great help to children who need some personal time and attention to cope with family stresses. Teachers are often the most stable adult figure in the life of a child whose parents are in the middle of a divorce or separation. In a family where a child has little or no contact with his or her non-custodial parent, the relationship with an adult, especially if the adult is the same sex as the absent parent, may be particularly helpful. If a teacher has a close relationship with a student during family transition, he or she can more quickly identify any new problems, provide immediate support to the student, and arrange timely referrals if more help is needed (Drake, 1981 in Hargreaves, 1991).

How else can schools and teachers help children during a time of crisis? Researchers agree on how schools and teachers can help students to make a successful adjustment through a family crisis or transition. They recommend that in these situations a teacher should consider the following guidelines (Randall, 1981; Appel, 1985; Beckwith, Miller, Morris, & Sage, 1986 in Hargreaves, 1991).

1. Be understanding, warm, and caring, and patient with the child.
2. Acknowledge and actively listen to the child's feelings.

3. Communicate with the child's family, and be available as a source of support for the child's family.
4. Identify potential learning and behavior problems, and deal with them as soon as possible.
5. Maintain high expectations for the child, and help validate and build the child's self-esteem.
6. Monitor changes in the child's family status.

Other school personnel can also offer support to children during difficult times. Some elementary schools offer guidance counselors who can establish a good relationship with the students and their parents. For elementary school-age children, school is their major place of activity, a "second home" where it is natural for a child to turn for support. When group counseling is offered in schools, children can continue to keep in contact with others they meet in their groups and they have the opportunity to establish some rapport with the school professional who leads the group (Moore, 1985 in Hargreaves, 1991). At a time when many parents are distracted by their own problems, alert teachers and school staff can spot a child in trouble quickly, and start counseling them early enough to try and prevent significant emotional damage and alleviate a need for later remedial help. It is important to note that when special counseling is offered in the school setting, parents and children do not have to deal with the cost, inconvenience, and possible stigma associated with using outside mental health services (Drake, 1981, in Hargreaves, 1991).

CHAPTER III: INTERVIEWS

Description of Subjects

The ten subjects in this study range in age from 27-60 and have been teaching a combined 140 years. They have taught at a variety of ages kindergarten through twelfth grade, and the majority of those interviewed are teaching at the elementary school level. Seven teachers, two principals, and one counselor were interviewed. The subjects were selected based on availability and years of teaching experience, administration, or counseling experience. The subjects are all currently working in public elementary schools in Los Angeles County.

How will Anonymity/Confidentiality be kept?

To maintain confidentiality and anonymity, once interviews were conducted the subjects' names were removed and replaced with numbers. All the interviews were conducted using a tape recorder, and the content of the tapes was kept confidential. The tapes were erased and discarded immediately after the completion of this project. For confidentiality purposes, subjects' names and or school names were not used.

Description of Procedure

Teachers, administrators, counselors were telephoned or asked in person to participate in an interview, which was being done for a thesis project. If they were available to participate they would be informed about the consent form (See Appendix A) and then an interview time and date would be scheduled. The subject was notified the day before the interview as a reminder. Before conducting the interview, the subject was

asked to sign the consent form. Upon signing the consent form the subject was asked if he or she would mind if a tape recorder was used to record the interview. If the subject was uncomfortable with a tape recorder, then careful notes would need to be taken and the subject would need to speak slower and repeat things when necessary. During the interview the subject was asked a scripted list of questions (see Appendix B). For each question the subject was given sufficient time to answer the question as thoroughly as possible.

CHAPTER IV: CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Description of Subjects

A total of 48 subjects (See Appendix D) were observed from a fourth grade (31 students) and second grade (17 students) classroom in two public elementary schools in Los Angeles County. The subjects ranged in age from seven to ten years old. The subjects were from a number of different cultural backgrounds and socioeconomic status was generally lower middle-to-middle class.

How will Anonymity/Confidentiality be kept?

To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, once observations were completed the subjects' names were removed and replaced with numbers. The recording sheets were discarded immediately after the completion of this project. For confidentiality purposes, subjects' names and or school names were not used for data analysis.

Description of Research Methodology and Design

The goal of this study was to observe children in the classroom and to note the general behavior patterns of each student, making predictions about which students were from divorced homes. After behavior patterns were recorded over a period of eight weeks, it was disclosed from what type of family each child came. If the teacher did not know about a particular family background, children were simply asked with whom they live. By not finding out what type of home the children came from before the study, the likelihood of observer bias was significantly decreased. Often when an observer enters the classroom the behavior of the children may change, but in this study the observer was

in each of the two classes each day for eight weeks. With the observer spending such a long amount of time in the classroom, it is unlikely that a student could have behaved differently simply because there was an observer in the room.

Description of Data Collection and Procedure

Children in two separate classes, grades, and schools were observed over a period of eight weeks each. Observations were made on different days during a variety of activities in order to get a clearer picture of general behavior patterns of the children. For the purposes of this study, classroom behavior consisted of the following four characteristics:

1) In Class Behavior-Does the child behave in class? Does the child follow classroom rules and school policy? The number of times/frequency a student gets in trouble, the amount of time or regularity a student has his/her name on the board, pulls a card, is sent to the office, fights (verbal or physical), detentions, suspensions, etc. are all considered indicators of misbehavior.

2) Interactions with Other Students-How well does the child get along with other students? Does he/she have friends and socialize often, or does he/she tend to spend a lot of time alone or isolated from classmates?

3) Interaction with the Teacher-How well does the child get along with his/her teacher? Does the student spend time positively conversing with the teacher, or does the student tend to avoid interaction with the teacher?

4) On-Task Behavior-Does the student follow directions and work hard on a given task?

Each of these four characteristics was rated using a Likert Scale: (1) always (2) most of the time (3) sometimes (4) rarely (5) never. If students were to get a total score of (4) then this meant they got the lowest possible score. A total score of (4) would indicate a student who always behaved in class, interacted well with others, interacted

well with the teacher, and was always on-task. In contrast, students who got a total score of (20) received the highest possible score. A total score of (20) would indicate a student who never behaved in class, interacted poorly with others, interacted poorly with the teacher, and was never on-task.

CHAPTER V: CLOSING

Discussions of Findings

In a brief overview of the literature, there are many factors that need to be considered when discussing children of divorce. The major contributing factors that may play a role in how a child responds to divorce are: parental conflict, parental involvement, family structure, economic strain, gender, and developmental characteristics. Divorce alone cannot be used as a significant determinate of behavioral problems of school-aged children. Several factors need to be considered when helping children deal with divorce and assisting them with any internal or external problems they may have (Emery, 1988).

In divorce, children often do not have parents or other adults readily available with to talk. This lack of availability often makes the school the next best source of adults for children. Teachers and administrators should take the time to learn about intervention methods and how to best deal with and assist children of divorce. Making themselves available to listen may be all that a child needs in his/her life. Furthermore, teachers and administrators need to make it a point to be accessible and approachable to their students. Schools can play a major role in helping children deal with divorce and can help promote a child's adjustment to the new situation (Freeman & Couchman, 1985 in Richardson & Rosen, 1999).

Children spend a lot of time at school, and teachers, principals, and counselors may often spend more time with students than their own parents. Teachers, principals, and counselors, therefore should be able to notice if children of divorce display more

behavior problems at school then children from intact homes. Of the ten school professionals interviewed it was evident that the majority of them felt divorce played a role in children's behavior. The summarized responses to the interview questions are as follows (see Appendix C):

Question 1: When you observe children in a classroom setting, do you notice any behavioral differences between children who come from two-parent families (intact) versus a divorced home background? Seven out of ten gave responses indicating that there were behavioral differences between children from intact and divorced homes. Summarizing the results, children from intact homes are more responsible because they have adults looking after them, achieve higher, and turn in homework on time. Children from divorced homes have more difficulty behaviorally and academically, and are more sensitive and likely to have emotional ups and downs.

Question 2: Is there a difference in how often children get in trouble between those from divorced homes and children from two-parent families (intact)? Five out of nine (one non-response) gave responses that indicated children from divorced homes get in trouble more often. In one interview it was mentioned that the best students come from intact homes and the percentages of students with less behavior problems are from intact families.

Question 3: How do children from divorced homes interact with other students versus children from two-parent homes (intact)? Seven out of ten gave responses indicating a difference in interaction of children from divorced homes versus intact

homes. In summarizing the results, children from divorced homes are more aggressive, pushy, needy for attention, physical, and have difficulty controlling anger.

Question 4: Is there any difference in the interaction with the administrator between a child from a divorced home and a child from a two-parent home? Six out of ten gave responses indicating a difference in interaction with administrators between children from divorced and intact homes. In summary, children of divorce have more attitude, want more attention, and talk out more. Others responded by saying that children all interacted the same with school professionals.

Question 5: Can you describe any differences that you have observed as far as on-task behavior for children from divorced families versus two-parent families? Six out of nine (one non-response) gave responses indicating a difference in on-task behavior between children from divorced and intact homes. After summarizing the results, it was found that children from divorced homes stray from directions, have other things on their minds, and have good and bad days depending on how things were going at home.

Question 6: Do you feel you have any personal insight with regard to divorced children? If so, could you describe your experiences? Summarizing the responses, it was mentioned that children from divorced homes need closer supervision in school, should not blame themselves, and structure. Teachers also need to have closer contact with parents, provide an environment of love and acceptance, and instill confidence in each child.

Question 7: Do you do anything special to assist children from divorced homes? The summarized responses are as follows: more contact with parents is important,

separate conferences if necessary, sensitive to backgrounds, try to remain neutral by not choosing sides between parents, be available, send separate mailings and report cards if necessary, and get to know children and their family histories before they come to the class.

Question 8: Do you have recommendations for other professionals as they deal with children from divorced homes? Summarizing the responses, realize that divorce is a norm in our society, closer contact with parents is needed to discuss child's behavior, children come from different backgrounds, they are people pleasers who do not want to disappoint, learn your student's family histories, be sensitive, provide structure, divorce should not to be used as an excuse, show concern in the matter but don't be nosy, be approachable, and unhappy children cannot learn.

Overall, there were not enough subjects observed to draw any definite correlations or conclusions between divorce and classroom behavior. In the second grade classroom, however, there was a statistically significant relationship found between divorce and totals (See Appendix E). The mean behavior total of children from divorced homes was 11, and the mean behavior total of children from intact homes was only 7.69 (See Appendix D). In the fourth grade classroom, there was not a statistically significant relationship between divorce and totals (See Appendix G). The mean behavior total of children from divorced homes was 8.27 and 7.95 for children from intact homes (See Appendix D). This meant that on average the mean behavior totals for children from divorced and intact homes were very similar. A larger sampling would need to be observed to get more accurate and reliable results.

Conclusions

Divorce is a tragic event that has become far too common in society. It is doubtful that any couples plan to get a divorce from the onset of marriage, but with close to half of all marriages ending in divorce, one may wonder why some couples choose marriage to begin with. Perhaps, the real tragedy is that often it is not the adults that are hurt most by the divorce, but the children. Depending on a child's age, he or she may or may not understand what is going on during a divorce, but regardless of a child's age he or she generally has little (if any) influence in the matter. All that the child knows is that dramatic changes are taking place and there is little (if anything) they can do to stop them.

Children of divorce come from all different types of home situations and each child, because of this should be dealt with on an individual basis. Children deal with divorce in different ways; some may not exhibit any behavioral problems and deal with it internally, while others may deal with it externally and do exhibit behavioral problems. Divorce does not necessarily mean that a child is predestined to exhibit behavior problems, but it does, however, place children at a greater risk for difficulties at school. When a child of divorce does experience difficulties at school, different factors need to be considered when assessing the problem.

Whether a relative, a friend, a co-worker, or a student, almost everyone has been touched by divorce in some way or another. For some, divorce is something that brings about unwanted and negative changes to their lives. For others divorce, although still difficult, is something that brings about necessary and positive changes to their lives.

The thing to remember is that divorce does not need to have negative outcomes; it is what you make of it and how you press on that determines the outcomes.

Implications for Pedagogical Practice

In all likelihood, every teacher and administrator at one time or another will have students in their class come from divorced homes. Some of these students may need assistance in dealing with the adjustments that accompany divorce while for others no such help may be needed. Regardless, school professionals need to make themselves approachable and available for their students. The feeling of approachability and availability that a school professional should possess comes from a positive rapport developed between the professional and his/her students. Taking the time to get to know each student personally is essential. This may mean setting time aside to find out about each student's family as well, but in order to better understand a student it is helpful to know a little about where they are coming from. Students may or not may not always be willing to share certain things with their teachers or administrator, but they need to know and understand that their teachers care for them and are there to listen whenever they need someone to talk to.

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Appendix A (Consent Form)

Consent Form

Participant's name: _____

I authorize (Kevin Shinoda) of the (Education Department), Biola University, La Mirada, California to gather information from me on the topic of (Children of Divorce and Classroom Behavior).

I understand that some people may become offended by some of the questions used in this study. I am aware that I will be participating in a structured interview. I am also aware that I may choose not to answer any questions that I find embarrassing or offensive.

I understand that it is my decision to allow (Kevin Shinoda) to tape record the interview, and that the information on the tape will be kept strictly confidential.

I also understand that if, after my participation, I experience any undue anxiety or stress that may have been provoked by the experience, (Kevin Shinoda) will be available for consultation.

The researcher will maintain confidentiality of research results. My individual results will not be released without my written consent.

_____ _____

Signature Date

There are two copies of this consent form included. Please sign one and return it to the researcher with your responses. The other copy you may keep for your records. Questions and comments may be addressed to (Kevin Shinoda), (Education Department), Biola University, 13800 Biola Ave., La Mirada, CA. 90639. Phone: (562) 903-6000.

Appendix B (Interview Questions)

Administrators

1. Have you taught in the classroom before? If so, how many years and what grade?
2. How many years have you been in administration?
3. When you observe children in a classroom setting, do you notice any behavioral differences between children who come from two-parent families versus a divorced home background?
4. Is there a difference in how often children get in trouble between those from divorced homes and children from two-parent families?
5. How do children from divorced homes interact with other students versus children from two-parent homes?
6. Is there any difference in the interaction with the administrator between a child from a divorced home and a child from a two-parent home?
7. Can you describe any differences that you have observed as far as on-task behavior for children from divorced families versus two-parent families?
8. Do you feel you have any personal insight with regard to divorced children? If so, could you describe your experiences?
9. Do you do anything special to assist children from divorced homes?
10. Do you have recommendations for other professionals as they deal with children from divorced homes?

Teachers

1. How long have you been teaching and in what grades?
2. When you observe children in a classroom setting, do you notice any behavioral differences between children who come from two-parent families versus a divorced home background?
3. Is there a difference in how often children get in trouble between those from divorced homes and children from two-parent families?
4. How do children from divorced homes interact with other students versus children from two-parent homes?
5. Is there any difference in the interaction with the teacher between a child from a divorced home and a child from a two-parent home?
6. Can you describe any differences that you have observed as far as on-task behavior for children from divorced families versus two-parent families?
7. Do you feel you have any personal insight with regard to divorced children? If so, could you describe your experiences?
8. Do you do anything special to assist children from divorced homes?
9. Do you have recommendations for other professionals as they deal with children from divorced homes?

Counselors

1. Have you taught in the classroom before? If so, how many years and what grade?
2. How many years have you been a psychologist?
3. When you observe children in a classroom setting, do you notice any behavioral differences between children who come from two-parent families versus a divorced home background?
4. Is there a difference in how often children get in trouble between those from divorced homes and children from two-parent families?
5. How do children from divorced homes interact with other students versus children from two-parent homes?
6. Is there any difference in the interaction with the psychologist between a child from a divorced home and a child from a two-parent home?
7. Can you describe any differences that you have observed as far as on-task behavior for children from divorced families versus two-parent families?
8. Do you feel you have any personal insight with regard to divorced children? If so, could you describe your experiences?
9. Do you do anything special to assist children from divorced homes?
10. Do you have recommendations for other professionals as they deal with children from divorced homes?

Appendix C (Results/Transcriptions)

1. When you observe children in a classroom setting, do you notice any behavioral differences between children who come from two-parent families (intact) versus a divorced home background?

Subject 1: definite differences, two-parent families (intact) are more organized and have children that are more responsible and achieve higher.

Subject 2: parental involvement regardless of divorce is a key factor.

Subject 3: two parent families are a little more grounded, homework is turned in on time, more responsible because they have adults looking after them.

Subject 4: generalizing, children from divorced homes tend to have more difficulty behaviorally.

Subject 5: no clear-cut lines.

Subject 6: bad term divorce leads to behavior and academic differences, but when parents work together on things they are O.K., biggest factor is if the divorce is recent then there are a lot of behavior differences, for example not turning in homework.

Subject 7: there are differences and exceptions.

Subject 8: yes and no, once noticed a lot of difference when it was only mom involved, but within the last five years fathers have become more involved, even families with both two-parent families still exhibit behavior problems, no direct correlation.

Subject 9: yes there are differences in some kids from divorced home, more behavior problems because of less structure.

Subject 10: more sensitive, emotional ups and downs more frequently, some are withdrawn and shy, some show more extroverted behavior, about 60% of behavior problems at school are children from divorced homes.

2. Is there a difference in how often children get in trouble between those from divorced homes and children from two-parent families (intact)?

Subject 1: more behavior problems, more consequences for them to fulfill for children from divorced homes.

Subject 2: depends on parental situation at home, no involvement leads to behavior problems.

Subject 3: the best students come from two-parent families; the percentages of students with less behavior problems are from two-parent families.

Subject 4: don't always know the family history but many children from divorced home do have behavior problems.

Subject 5: dysfunctional home lead to children who get in trouble the most.

Subject 6: no differences.

Subject 7: more behavior problems for children from divorced homes in general, needier emotionally, act as if they need to prove themselves, have difficulty with boundaries, difficulty making good choices and understanding consequences of their behavior, higher need for structure.

Subject 8: no not really, no correlation, parental involvement, lack of guidance and values in the home, lack of parenting skills, parents not committed to kids, too much responsibility on schools and teachers to do parent's job.

Subject 9: children from divorced homes get in trouble more often, parents say it happens at home to and they don't know what to do about it.

Subject 10: no response noted.

3. How do children from divorced homes interact with other students versus children from two-parent homes (intact)?

Subject 1: children from divorced home are more aggressive and push a lot.

Subject 2: children from divorced homes need that attention from other students and get it in the wrong ways, have problems making friends, often have a "bad day" because of something that happened at home.

Subject 3: children from single-parent homes have more behavior problems, not as much with parents, less love shown from parents, act out looking for love.

Subject 4: children from divorced homes tend to have difficulty controlling anger, tend to react without thinking, and tend to be more physical with others.

Subject 5: no differentiation.

Subject 6: no, but it depends on how the divorce came about.

Subject 7: some children from divorced homes have a difficult time getting along with other students, more aggressive, extremes-quiet and withdrawn or more aggressive and unsure about how to interact with other students.

Subject 8: in the past kids didn't know what divorce was, families are different now, family arrangements are different.

Subject 9: no differences.

Subject 10: yes, children from divorced home do act differently toward others and often teachers will make recommendations for counseling when problems cannot be solved by the classroom teacher.

4. Is there any difference in the interaction with the administrator between a child from a divorced home and a child from a two-parent home (intact)?

Subject 1: children from divorced home have more attitude.

Subject 2: mostly try to treat all kids the same and expect the same in how they treat me, adapt to individual situations, and listen to them.

Subject 3: kids are kids, but more talking out, higher percentage of better-behaved kids comes from two-parent homes.

Subject 4: learn to work with children from divorced homes and where they are coming from, give them time to calm down when dealing with them, try to establish good rapport with them, try to find something good in all of them.

Subject 5: for the most part all kids deal with teachers and administrators in the same way except in extreme cases.

Subject 6: no.

Subject 7: notice a dichotomy-some are needier for attention, others are withdrawn and don't interact with teacher at the same level, often sell themselves short, higher standards in two-parent families.

Subject 8: no issues.

Subject 9: children from divorced homes tend to want more attention.

Subject 10: work on asset building as a staff and it teaches them that children are not as secure and try to give them extra understanding, helps to teach how to work with parents and the situation child is going through.

5. Can you describe any differences that you have observed as far as on-task behavior for children from divorced families versus two-parent families (intact)?

Subject 1: children from divorced homes stray from directions.

Subject 2: if things were good at home that day then the kid will have a good day at school.

Subject 3: kids with good attention spans and can focus come form good families that time together, divorced home families do not have the same time to give and guidelines for kids to follow as two-parent families.

Subject 4: no response noted.

Subject 5: no differences.

Subject 6: yes, a lot of times kids from divorced homes have it on their mind, especially those going through a recent divorce, they are easily distracted, need more attention, complain about aches and pains for attention because they may not be getting attention at home.

Subject 7: two extremes-some need attention, promotion, supervision, intervention, support, some are over achievers who need to prove themselves quietly, some need more prompting regarding work and turning homework in on time.

Subject 8: no differences in recent past.

Subject 9: no differences, kids are on-task when they want to be.

Subject 10: depends on if an upsetting event has occurred recently for the child, if not then no differences.

6. Do you feel you have any personal insight with regard to divorced children? If so, could you describe your experiences?

Subject 1: they need closer supervision, closer contact with parents of children of divorce.

Subject 2: came from a divorced home, knows the tricks and doesn't fall for them.

Subject 3: come from a good Christian family with two involved parents, ate meals together as a family, kids who get in trouble tend to come from families that have problems.

Subject 4: own children came from a divorced home at a young age, it can be overcome, and divorce is wrong and regrets putting own children through it.

Subject 5: has four stepchildren who are all successful.

Subject 6: through teaching has seen the different stages of divorce, gives insight on how to help kids with their situation.

Subject 7: kids blame themselves, feel responsible, school needs to be a safe place, greater confidence needs to be instilled in each child, provide an environment of love and acceptance.

Subject 8: came from a divorced family from the age of three, father not in the picture to this day, structured family and discipline are keys, has strong mother that is admired.

Subject 9: some times parents stress kids out more than they need to, parents not knowing how to deal with kids during a divorce.

Subject 10: has dealt with relatives that have gone through divorce and has seen positive outcomes in some cases.

7. Do you do anything special to assist children from divorced homes?

Subject 1: more contact with parents.

Subject 2: two different conferences if parents want it this way, calls both parents, extra copies of report cards.

Subject 3: sensitive to backgrounds of kids and if they are having a bad day, more breaks to those kids, helps those who need extra help, little things like staying in at recess or after school to work with them.

Subject 4: counseling is available, group sessions, hard to be aware of what each family is going through, custody battles often put schools in the middle and make them take a side, school must try to remain neutral.

Subject 5: nothing specific, let children know that there is someone available to listen.

Subject 6: more leeway with regards to behavior, talk to the parent about child's behavior, more attention to those children if needed, could ask counselor for help.

Subject 7: close contact with parents; invite both parents to conferences, separate mailings, extra report cards if wanted.

Subject 8: find out about family situation before child enters the class, siblings, who do they live with, sometimes a sensitive issue about how to address people or how to comment about situation.

Subject 9: nothing, they are still kids that don't want to be separated or singled out.

Subject 10: counseling, psychologists, faculty goes through training in asset building that teaches awareness to students' needs.

8. Do you have recommendations for other professionals as they deal with children from divorced homes?

Subject 1: it is a prevalent problem; realize that it has become a norm, closer contact with parents about child's behavior.

Subject 2: realize that children come from different background but same expectations, but understand their situation, that they are people pleasers, not wanting to disappoint anyone, they want to be loved, accepted, their feelings are hurt easily, they are one or the other, a behavior problem or people pleasers.

Subject 3: important to know about your kids family history, be sensitive to individual backgrounds, take things in to perspective when dealing with them, but to hold accountable regardless.

Subject 4: be sensitive to what kids are going through; find out more information about what a child is going through, kids need contact with both parents regardless of what one parent may want.

Subject 5: be sensitive to the kid's and adult's situation.

Subject 6: get to know the full home life, keep in contact with parents and let them know about their kid's behavior at school.

Subject 7: they need more structure, dependable, predictable, and reliable, environments, not sure of where they are going, their chaotic lives need structure, and a consistent caring environment, they need to take responsibility for behavior and actions, need to look at each child as an individual regardless of home life, each child is a unique package, do what can be done right now with the resources available regardless of the home situation, help them to become all they can be, and find out what they need and what can be done on a day to day basis to help them.

Subject 8: it is not the divorce issue it is not something that should be used as an excuse, whether divorce, death, etc., be sensitive to the issue at hand, not to be too nosy, but to show that you just care about the child, immediate communication with parents, talk to team members for advice, divorce is not an excuse, making it too easy for parents not to do parenting job and kids have become more of an inconvenience than commitment for parents, schools are now being held accountable for everything (teaching respect and life values and morality), and when things go wrong, blame is put on the school and teachers and not parents.

Subject 9: be there when kids need you, be approachable, be open and understanding because you may be the only one they can turn to.

Subject 10: this lifestyle is increasing regardless of socioeconomic status, asset building needs to be a priority for faculty, an unhappy child with other things on his mind cannot learn, character counts is a great program to help these children also.

Appendix D (Mean Totals For Classroom Observations)

These tables show the mean Total for each level of Divorce. They also show the standard error of each mean, which is a measure of its sampling variability. The standard error is formed by dividing the pooled standard deviation by the square root of the number of observations at each level. The tables also display an interval around each mean. The intervals currently displaced are based on Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) procedure. They are constructed in such a way that if two means are the same, their intervals will overlap 95% of the time.

Table of Means for Totals by Divorce for 2nd Grade Class

Divorce	Count	Mean	Stnd. error (pooled s)	Lower limit	Upper limit
0	13	7.69231	0.718864	6.60886	8.77575
1	4	11.0	1.29595	9.04679	12.9532
Total	17	8.47059			

The mean behavior score for children from intact homes was 7.69231 and 11.0 for children from divorced homes. In this class there was a significant difference in mean scores which demonstrated a relationship between divorce and mean behavior totals.

Table of Means for Totals by Divorce for 4th Grade Class

Divorce	Count	Mean	Stnd. error (pooled s)	Lower limit	Upper limit
0	20	7.95	0.686234	6.95757	8.94243
1	11	8.27273	0.925318	6.93453	9.61092
Total	31	8.06452			

The mean behavior score for children from intact homes was 7.95 and 8.27273 for children from divorced homes. In this class there was not a significant difference in mean scores, thus there was no relationship between divorce and mean behavior totals.

Appendix E (Statistical Analysis of 2nd Grade Data)

2nd Grade Class Summary

Regression Analysis - Linear model: Y = a + b*X

Dependent variable: Divorce
Independent variable: Totals

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Statistic	P-Value
Intercept	-0.403155	0.301379	-1.3377	0.2009
Slope	0.0753725	0.0337698	2.23195	0.0413

Analysis of Variance

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Ratio	P-Value
Model	0.762592	1	0.762592	4.98	0.041
Residual	2.29623	15	0.153082		
Total (Corr.)	3.05882	16			

Correlation Coefficient = 0.499308
R-squared = 24.9309 percent
Standard Error of Est. = 0.391257

The StatAdvisor

The output shows the results of fitting a linear model to describe the relationship between Divorce and Totals. The equation of the fitted model is

Divorce = -0.403155 + 0.0753725*Totals

Since the P-value in the ANOVA table is less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant relationship between Divorce and Totals at the 95% confidence level.

The R-Squared statistic indicates that the model as fitted explains 24.9309% of the variability in Divorce. The correlation coefficient equals 0.499308, indicating a relatively weak relationship between the variables. The standard error of the estimate shows the standard deviation of the residuals to be 0.391257. This value can be used to construct prediction limits for new observations by selecting the Forecasts option from the text menu.

Appendix F (Frequency Chart for 2nd Grade Class)

2nd Grade Class Summary

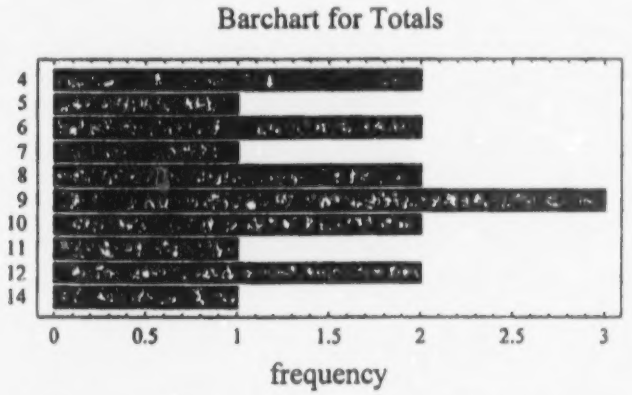

Figure X. Frequency Bar Chart for 2nd Grade Class

Class	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
1	4	2	0.1176	2	0.1176
2	5	1	0.0588	3	0.1765
3	6	2	0.1176	5	0.2941
4	7	1	0.0588	6	0.3529
5	8	2	0.1176	8	0.4706
6	9	3	0.1765	11	0.6471
7	10	2	0.1176	13	0.7647
8	11	1	0.0588	14	0.8235
9	12	2	0.1176	16	0.9412
10	14	1	0.0588	17	1.0000

Table X Frequency Table for 2nd Grade Class Totals

This table shows the number of times each value of Totals occurred, as well as percentages and cumulative statistics. For example, in 2 rows of the data file Totals equaled 4. This represents 11.7647% of the 17 values in the file. The rightmost two columns give counts and percentages from the top of the table down.

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Appendix G (Statistical Analysis of 4th Grade Data)

4th Grade Class Summary

Regression Analysis - Linear model: Y = a + b*X

Dependent variable: Divorce
Independent variable: Totals

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	T Statistic	P-Value
Intercept	0.287397	0.256572	1.12014	0.2718
Slope	0.00836278	0.0298519	0.280143	0.7814

Analysis of Variance

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Ratio	P-Value
Model	0.0191535	1	0.0191535	0.08	0.7814
Residual	7.07762	29	0.244056		
Total (Corr.)	7.09677	30			

Correlation Coefficient = 0.0519509
R-squared = 0.26989 percent
Standard Error of Est. = 0.49402

The StatAdvisor

The output shows the results of fitting a linear model to describe the relationship between Divorce and Totals. The equation of the fitted model is

Divorce = 0.287397 + 0.00836278*Totals

Since the P-value in the ANOVA table is greater or equal to 0.10, there is not a statistically significant relationship between Divorce and Totals at the 90% or higher confidence level.

The R-Squared statistic indicates that the model as fitted explains 0.26989% of the variability in Divorce. The correlation coefficient equals 0.0519509, indicating a relatively weak relationship between the variables. The standard error of the estimate shows the standard deviation of the residuals to be 0.49402. This value can be used to construct prediction limits for new observations by selecting the Forecasts option from the text menu.

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Appendix H (Frequency Chart for 4th Grade Class)

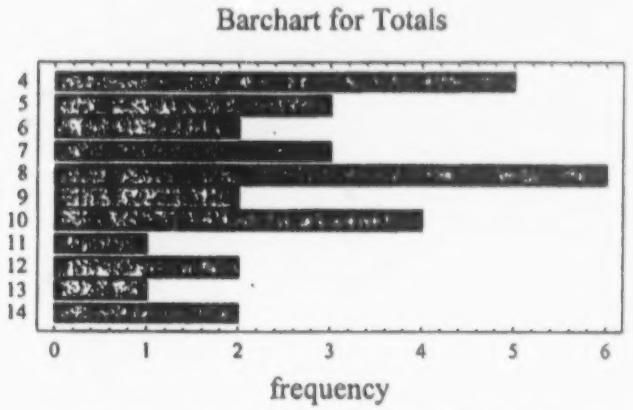

Figure X Frequency Bar Chart for 4th Grade Class

Class	Value	Frequency	Relative Frequency	Cumulative Frequency	Cum. Rel. Frequency
1	4	5	0.1613	5	0.1613
2	5	3	0.0968	8	0.2581
3	6	2	0.0645	10	0.3226
4	7	3	0.0968	13	0.4194
5	8	6	0.1935	19	0.6129
6	9	2	0.0645	21	0.6774
7	10	4	0.1290	25	0.8065
8	11	1	0.0323	26	0.8387
9	12	2	0.0645	28	0.9032
10	13	1	0.0323	29	0.9355
11	14	2	0.0645	31	1.0000

Table X Frequency Table for 4th Grade Class

This table shows the number of times each value of Totals occurred, as well as percentages and cumulative statistics. For example, in 5 rows of the data file Totals equaled 4. This represents 16.129% of the 31 values in the file. The rightmost two columns give counts and percentages from the top of the table down.

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